

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes
October 5, 2010

Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, October 5, 2010 in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Rodney Ashcraft, Councilman
Genia Blackwell, Councilwoman
Norman Dorn, Councilman

Others present:

Alton Brown, County Administrator
Lynn Strom, Finance/Budget Manager
Michael S. Medlock, County Attorney
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council
and others as per list attached

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and the invocation was given by County Attorney Michael Medlock. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council Agenda

The October 5, 2010 council agenda was approved with a motion made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilwoman Blackwell, including adding Resolution No. 10-11-325, "A Resolution Appointing Members of the Edgefield County Employee Grievance Committee." Motion carried unanimously.

September 7, 2010 Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Blackwell to approve the September 7, 2010 council meeting minutes, excluding the administrator's comments from August 10, 2010, consisting of the fourteen pages. At this time, Attorney Medlock addressed the chairman stating that an amendment be made to Page 3, Paragraph five, "Attorney Medlock explained that Ordinance No. 10-11-629 making a change to a table. Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to amend Section 152.045 of the Land Development & Zoning Regulations of the Code of Ordinances. That should be amending Section 152.022. Mr. Medlock stated that Councilwoman Blackwell had made a verbal motion to add the language regarding ham radio towers and the like. He agreed to draft an ordinance which is before you tonight for that purpose and then she withdrew that. So, council actually passed the amendment to 152.022. That change should be made to the September 7th minutes.

The chairman asked for a second. The administrator stated that the administrator's

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comments were approved at that meeting. If you remember there is a stipulation that you would move those (comments) from the August to the September meeting, and that motion was approved unanimously, as I recall (administrator).

Councilwoman Blackwell: "But the minutes were not approved. The motion was made to move the minutes to the September minutes at the September meeting but we did not approve the minutes. My motion stands." (To approve the September 7th minutes excluding the administrator's comments of fourteen (14) pages from August 10, 2010.) Councilman Ashcraft seconded the motion, at which time the administrator asked "why would you want to remove those?" Blackwell: "It did not happen during the meeting and it is not relevant to the meeting. It was not county business – it did not happen during a county council meeting."

Administrator: "You had asked that my comments be included, I believe, in the July or June and I thought that you would like to know why I made those comments and I think they are germane. Just as the comments that were made - why I made those comments are germane as well."

Blackwell: "The July posting on the web site is correct – the minutes that were voted on in July are correct. My motion stands, and the second."

Chairman: Motion and a second, any more comments? All in favor? Two yeas, two nays, one abstain (chairman). The motion failed for the lack of a majority, as agreed by the attorney.

September 15, 2010 Minutes of the called meeting of council were approved with a motion made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Councilman Dorn asked for an explanation on "Basic Management Standards Audit" under "Miscellaneous Reports." The administrator stated it is an audit report concerning workers comp, complimenting two of the employees (Lee Ann and Kathy) working on that particular audit.

The second report concerns South Carolina's Employment/Unemployment Situation. The reports shows where Edgefield County ranks in the state.

Councilwoman Blackwell addressed the chairman concerning the correction to the EC Hospital Board Meeting Minutes. They were approved without a correction. The chairman asked if that was the 15th. No, that was from September 7th where it is stated

that the chairman asked for correction to the minutes of the hospital going from the milage rate of 6.5 to seven.

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The administrator stated “that is correct.” “Pat Robinson’s husband has been very ill and I did not get with her to undertake this. I thought she had more things to do with the illness of her husband. I will get with her in the next thirty (30) days and ask her about that correction. I thought she just had more things she needed to be worried about than that.” The chairman asked if we could take that up at the next meeting and the administrator said he would do his best.

Old Business

Motion was made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Bright to approve third reading of Ordinance No. 10-11-629, “An Ordinance Amending the Land Development and Zoning Regulations of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Conditionally Allow “Communication Towers & Antennas” in Those Areas of the County Zoned “RD”. Motion carried unanimously.

(The Land Development & Zoning Regulations chart (page 25), Title XV Land Usage, Sector 51: Information, Communication towers & antennas, RD, change “N” not permitted to “C” conditionally permitted.)

Lease Purchase / Sheriff’s Vehicles

Captain Wash addressed council concerning a lease purchase plan for vehicles. Attorney Medlock explained that under the county’s purchasing ordinance three bids are required, instead of going with one. This council cannot bind the future council as far as a lease is concerned. It is called a “non-appropriations clause” -what if we do not have the money next year and we cannot appropriate it in the budget. Most finance companies understand that with governmental units. We would have to be sure there is a non-appropriations clause is in there. After discussion and no decision, a motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright to table this item. Motion carried unanimously.

Plantation Point Drive

Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilwoman Blackwell, to accept Plantation Point Drive into the county road maintenance system. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Ordinances

Motion was made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 10-11-630, “An Ordinance Adding to and Amending Section 152.045 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Create an Exception from Regulation as to Amateur Radio, Citizens Band Radio, or Television Reception Towers, Masts and/or Antennas.” Motion carried unanimously.

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The first reading of Ordinance No. 10-11-631 was approved with a motion made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Ashcraft. Motion carried unanimously. This ordinance is "Authorizing (1) the Entering into Execution and Delivery of a Fee in Lieu of Tax and Incentive Agreement (The "Fee Agreement") Between Edgefield County, South Carolina ("The County") and Pac Tell Group, Inc., Acting for Itself or an Affiliate or Other Project Sponsor, (Collectively, the "Company"), Whereby, in Connection with the Expansion of Certain Manufacturing Facilities in the County (The "Project"), the County will Covenant in Such Fee Agreement to Accept Certain Negotiated Fees in Lieu of *Ad Valorem* Taxes with Respect to the Project; and (2) Other Matters Relating Thereto."

Resolutions

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve Resolution No. 10-11-324, "A Resolution Authorizing (1) The Entering Into, Execution and Delivery of a Fee in Lieu of Tax and Incentive Agreement Between Edgefield County, South Carolina ("The County") and Pac Tell Group, Inc., Acting for Itself or an Affiliate or Other Project Sponsor, (Collectively, The "Company"), Whereby, in Connection With the Expansion of Certain Manufacturing, Facilities in the County (The "Project"), the County Will Covenant in Such Agreement to Accept Certain Negotiated Fees in Lieu of *Ad Valorem* Taxes With Respect to the Project; and (2) Other Matters Relating Thereto." Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 10-11-323, "A Resolution Authorizing the Edgefield County Council Chairman to Enter into Mutual Aid Agreements" passed with a motion made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously. These mutual aid agreements are with Aiken, Saluda, and McCormick Counties.

Millage Presentation

Mr. Bill Gilchrist, Edgefield County Auditor, presented the following millage rates for the 2010 tax year in Edgefield County:

<u>Edgefield County Council</u>		<u>Edgefield County School District</u>	
County Operations	74.90	School Operations	189.84
County Debt Serv.	4.36	School Bonds	<u>24.50</u>
Industrial Dev.	0.83		214.34
Recreation	1.50		
EMS	10.40	Total millage rate for Edgefield County	322.83
Hosp. Operations	6.50	" " " EC	Inc. area. 312.83
Fire District	<u>10.00</u>		
	108.49		

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qPublic Web Hosting Agreement

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Dorn, for Edgefield County to enter into an agreement with qPublic LLC to provide a web site available for access by the public to obtain information currently available only at the Tax Assessor's office. It is called the Not a Dime program. The individuals using the site will pay for the services, instead of the county paying. If later the county wants to provide this service for the citizens at no charge then the county would pay the \$6,000.00 per year. Motion carried unanimously.

Ambulance Service / Private Events

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilwoman Blackwell, to receive as information the consideration of adopting a policy for providing ambulance service to private events. Motion carried unanimously.

An item added to agenda, and was approved along with the approval of the October 5th agenda.

Resolution No. 10-11-325, "A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE EDGEFIELD COUNTY EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE.". This committee will have the assistance of the county attorney. The attorney stated that names were put in a "hat" to be drawn. The supervisor of the employee selected was contacted to let them know that that employee had been selected and contacted the employee to ask if they were willing to serve. Two of the initial five pulled would not serve, so two more were pulled. The treasurer, Arlene Traxler, pulled the names. There were two witnesses. As the names were pulled the first two got the first terms; second two got the next term and the last one got the third term. The attorney stated he is preparing a handbook for the committee with a copy of the rules from our handbook. The committee will operate under the Roberts Rules. The first thing they will have to do is elect a chairman. The handbook basically spells out what the committee does, and it is very limited. The grievance committee procedure comes from state law.

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve Resolution No. 10-11-325. Motion carried 4-1, with Councilwoman Blackwell voting nay.

Name for Calliham Building

Councilwoman Blackwell addressed the chairman at this time, stating that "Mr. Chairman being that you have served the citizens of Edgefield County for the past twenty years, nineteen of those years as chairman, and I think we all know how hard you have worked on our new government building and this is your last term in office, I would like to make the motion that we name the building "The Kneece Building" and dedicate the building to you in your honor."

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Councilman Dorn asked the chairman “could we put your whole name down there (on the building)?” Ms. Blackwell said she would like to see it dedicated to you and your picture with your tenure served and a plaque on the inside.

Mr. Kneece turned the voting over to the Vice Chairman, Willie Bright.

With the motion made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Dorn, that the new government building will be named “*The Monroe Kneece Building*”. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Mr. Kneece abstained from the vote.

Recognition of Guests

Shirley Newby, Clerk of Court, addressed council to ask for electronic keys and panic bars to be placed on the outside doors of the courthouse by November 1st. This is the next general sessions and the last general sessions there were a lot of problems. She explained the necessity of having these items. Ms. Newby did not have a price. The chairman suggested that the administrator talk with Mike Reed and have it done. But at this time with so much emphasis on the Calliham building trying to get the building ready so the Building/Planning Dept. can move within the next couple weeks (deadline to be out of the existing location) the administrator said in order to have a vendor list, bid out, and back to council and installed by Nov. 1st is a tall order.

Ms. Newby also brought up the carpet in the entrance of the courthouse (street level). She would like to remove the carpet and restore the plank floor beneath the carpet. The old flooring extends to the ladies’ restroom. The chairman asked the administrator to look into this, along with Mike Reed.

Art Biggs

Mr. Biggs spoke concerning the lease-purchase plan that the council is considering for vehicles for the sheriff’s office.

Linda Nidiffer

Ms. Nidiffer congratulated the chairman for having a building named after him. The chairman thanked her.

At this time the chairman brought up Agenda Item No. 16 the county administrator’s classification request.”

Mr. Brown asked that the county administrator’s position be reclassified from thirty five hours per week to forty hours per week. After Councilman Dorn made a motion to approve, **without an increase in pay**, before a second was made, the administrator withdrew his request

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Comments from public

Fred Humes (Economic Development Partnership) introduced Wilson (Will) Williams that is now employed with the Economic Development.

County Administrator Remarks

Mr. Brown gave each council member a handout and asked they be included as administrator remarks in the October minutes.

There being no further business Councilman Dorn made the motion to adjourn. The next regular council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 2, 2010, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield..

ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

Rodney Ashcraft, Councilman

Regenia Blackwell, Councilwoman

Norman Dorn, Councilman

REMARKS BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

OCTOBER 5, 2010

**The Edgefield Daily
Editor's Post
August 10, 2010**

I hear that Edgefield County Administrator Alton Brown had to have surgery this week and he will be out of commission for 4 to 6 weeks. I hope it had nothing to do with County Attorney Michael Medlock's head having to be removed from his rear end.

Administrator's Post:

Actually, I had rotator cuff surgery.

**The Edgefield Daily
Wandering Minds
August 12, 2010**

I thought (County Administrator Alton) Brown was supposed to be out for "4 to 6 weeks" for surgery but in the story (Wednesday) said he was at the meeting. That is a fast recovery or you were way off on your claim.

Editor's Note:

However, Mr. Brown spends more time out of the office than our Tax Assessor so it's hard to determine when they are missing for legitimate reasons or just "missing".

Administrator Note:

There is no justification for questioning the amount of time I spend "missing" from the office.

**The Edgefield Daily
September Edgefield County Council Meeting Sees Items Challenged, Questioned and Postponed
September 8, 2010**

At the beginning of the meeting Councilwoman Blackwell interrupted Chairman Monroe Kneece as he began reading for the approval of the August 10 regular meeting saying she did not understand how up to twelve to fourteen pages of

“administrator’s remarks” were added to the minutes when Administrator Alton Brown made no comments at the meeting when asked for his report.

“There are twelve, thirteen, fourteen pages of comments that are not relevant to anything discussed at the meeting,” Councilwoman Blackwell said. Mr. Brown spoke up and stated that he would “stipulate” the comments should be removed and asked that they be

attached to the July

meeting. Chairman Kneece then called for a vote to accept the minutes of the August meeting without the comments which passed unanimously as did the approval of the minutes of the called August 16 meeting.

No vote was taken to place the comments on the July meeting’s minutes, which have already been approved.

Administrator Post:

I stated that I was willing to so stipulate that. Further stating that I believed under the rules that you can add anything to the minutes you would like. Under the circumstances I was willing to stipulate that Ms. Blackwell was correct and asked that those administrator’s comments be added to the September minutes. The Chair asked Ms. Blackwell if that was satisfactory and she responded, “Yes.” Councilman Dorn made the motion to approve adding the administrator’s comments to the September minutes of council. Motion carried unanimously.

The Edgefield Daily

Editor's note:

September 9, 2010

Councilwoman Blackwell (R- Merriwether) is supported by Councilman Rodney Ashcraft (R-Merriwether/Edgefield) who also makes similar stands against the controlling Democrat majority and both have been attacked by the "Edgefield Political Machine", Norman Dorn (D-Edgefield) as well as the sitting County Administrator Alton Brown. Make of that what you will.

Administrator's Note:

I suppose that if one repeats something often enough,

Edgefield Daily

Editor’s note:

September 21, 2010

County Administrator Brown, as you will recall, made it a point to make his opinions of the upcoming elections known while deriding Republican candidate for County Council Dean Campbell during the July meeting.

Call me crazy (and Brown, Bettis Rainsford and Glenn certainly do) but when Brown comes out officially against a Republican candidate.

Administrator's Note:

My only reference to a candidate has been in response to:

**The Edgefield Daily
Editor's Post:
June 23, 2010**

It is time County Administrator Alton Brown goes on the record on the hard questions on county matters. The honeymoon is over. Step up to the plate or be relegated as one of the water bearers of the past who have been run out of the job for doing the same thing.

There may be more than one seat challenged in November and his job might just hang on the outcome, as well as the county attorney Michael Medlock. The single seat up for grabs in November could send a shockwave through the county government, even more if two seats are overturned.

And consisted of the following from the Edgefield County Council Regular Meeting Minutes, July 6, 2010:

Hostile, in this form, is a legal setting when management takes action against an employee or employees by creating an environment, which causes severe stress to the employee, or employees. Specifically in this case, the Daily Editor has publicly alleged corruption and receiving kickbacks on the part of employees by name without offering any documentation. Further, there exists a spousal relationship between the editor and a council member, which implies a strong complicity between the two and the editor's comments as suggested by:

(1) The editor's 6/20/10 comment addressed to employees in the administration building "Genia is out of the country so I can write anything I want, followed by

(2) the editor's comments of the editor's June 23, 2010 post "Alton, the honeymoon is over, step up to the plate or be relegated as one of the water bearers of the past who have been run out of the job. There may be more than one seat challenged in November and your job might just hang in the balance on the outcome."

And I assume that those three votes that you have talked about would be Genia, Rodney and Dean.